The Alliance Weekly

FEBRUARY 27, 1957

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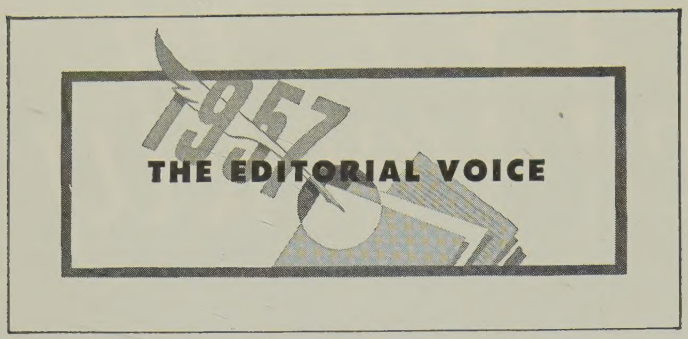
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA (see page 6)

In this issue

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

By Rev. Gilbert H. Johnson



A young Alliance pastor speaks his mind

I STILL BELIEVE IN NEGATIVES!

I know it isn't popular and it won't win me many friends, but nevertheless I want to go on record that I still believe in negatives! God still has some "don'ts" recorded in the Word, and as a Christian minister, I'm not willing to overlook them. In fact, it is a cause for real concern that so many apparently feel justified in toning down the message of separation. The hush-hush approach which condones the practices once associated with worldliness surely must be grieving to the Lord.

"Come out from among them" and "Touch not the unclean thing" may now be outmoded teachings to some, but not to me. Put it down, if you must, to the old-fashioned Alliance home in which I was raised. At least it produced four sons for the ministry and gave us a rich background of spiritual experience which included some disciplines. Christianity was presented as a positive message, of course, but there were also some strong negatives by which we were taught to abide. It did seem to make sense that if one's life would please the Lord there would be some things he would refrain from doing. The Bible may not have named such items as smoking, drinking, dancing, card playing and the theatre, but neither did it require an astute theologian to decipher that a Spirit-filled Christian should be separated from such practices. One could hardly picture the Saviour indulging in them.

There is a subtle but increasing tendency even in the pulpit to be careful lest you hurt people's feelings. But Jeremiah never worried too much about his hearers on that score, nor did Amos and Isaiah. In fact, neither did the Master. The present-day kid-glove attitude was strangely missing from the ministry of most of the prophets of old and even from the greater men of more modern days. And John's "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," was strong language, too. He even dared to go a bit further by flatly stating "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

It may take a decade to show it but the structure of the local church is greatly weakened when separation is dropped from the membership requirements. Or when well-meaning people are allowed to sing in the choir and teach in the Sunday school while still dabbling in the world. It may cost you something personally and your church may not increase numerically quite so rapidly, but it will prove worthwhile to preach an practice separation. Holiness and sanctification must b more than words and doctrine, they must become way of life. Separation is only a part of this way of lif but it is certainly a very vital part.

Woe betide the pastor and the church who turn t an easier way to build the membership. The likel dividends in heartaches and spiritual sterility are no worth the temporary gains. Be assured that several yea hence your successor will not thank you for your la of foresight in failing to keep the standards high. An you yourself may yet one day awaken to find that yo have a church in name only!—Donald R. Shepson.

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CHRIST THE BEST OF FRIENDS

All the excellency, glory and beauty which is found men or angels flows from Christ, as a drop of wat from the ocean or a ray of light from the sun. If, the you supremely love the creature, can you wonder th Christians should love the Creator? If you admire a image in a glass, is it strange that they should admi the sun by which it was painted? Can you wonder th those who behold the glory of God in the face of Jesu Christ should be sweetly drawn to Him by the cor of love and lose their fondness for created glories?

All that you love and admire and wish for in creature and indeed infinitely more, they find in Him. Do yo wish for a friend possessed of power to protect you? O Friend possesses all power in heaven and earth and able to save even to the uttermost.

Do you wish for a wise and experienced friend? Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledg Do you wish for a tender, compassionate friend? Chri is tenderness and compassion itself. Do you wish for faithful, unchangeable friend? With Christ there no variableness nor shadow of turning, but He is t same yesterday, today and forever. His unchangeabl love will ever prompt Him to make His people happ His unerring wisdom will point out the best means promote their happiness and His infinite power w enable Him to employ those means.

In all these respects our Beloved is more than anothe beloved; for creatures are not always disposed render us happy; when they are disposed to do it, th do not always know how; and when they know ho they are often unable. Better is it therefore to trust Christ than to put confidence in princes.—Edwa Payson.

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QUOTES FROM THE FATHERS

By the interior mind of Christ we mean that which w the principal rule of His life. It is the inner mi which stamps all our actions and which causes the wi difference between things seemingly alike, accordi to the purity and holiness of the motives whence th spring. Those who would study the interior life mu seek to know the mind of the model of all Christia Jesus the Christ.—Jean Nicolas Grou.

By REV. GILBERT H. JOHNSON, B.D.

Fellowship with God

An Exposition of First John 1:5-10

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

THIS then is the message," wrote hn. The idea in the word "mes- ge" is not only that a proclamation being made, but also that ac- mpanying it is a promise.

John had received a wonderful essage from God by His Spirit d was about to declare it in all fullness and deep spiritual signif- ance. In it he revealed the basis our fellowship with God. "Fel- wship," in the scriptural sense, con- ns the thought of communication d participation. It is the idea of mmuning or having something in mmon with someone else. The ture of this fellowship transcends other fellowships which are ex- rienced among men. It is the only lowship which grants permanent isfaction to the one who enjoys ep intimacy with God.

Of the One with whom we enter o this fellowship John wrote, "God light, and in him is no darkness all" (verse 5). B. C. Caffin makes ar the meaning of this declaration en he states, "God is light; not light, nor *a* light, but light; that His nature. This sums up the ine essence on its intellectual e, as 'God is love' on its moral e. Light and love are not at- utes of God, but Himself."

The Bible often uses the term "light" in describing Deity. In James 1:17 God is spoken of as "the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The psalmist exclaimed, "O Lord my God, thou . . . coverest thyself with light as with a garment" (104:1, 2). Jesus boldly declared, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). The first creative act of God was the production of light (Gen. 1:3), and it is essential to all life. If the light of the sun were to be diminished, then life on the earth would soon be extinguished.

The true nature of light is no more clearly set forth than in the words of R. S. Candlish: "While it contacts all things, it is itself affected by nothing. It kisses carrion; it embraces foul pollution; it enters into the innermost recesses of rottenness in which worms uncleanly revel. It is the same clear element of light still; taking no soil; contracting no stain;—its brightness not dimmed nor its peerless beauty marred. It endureth forever, clean and clear." This surely reveals the nature and activity of God Himself. The glory of it is demonstrated in the incarnation of Christ. Although He contacted all classes of people, He remained absolutely free from every taint of sin. Indeed He was "Son of God, love's pure light." This transparency of the divine nature is to be reflected in the lives of those who have been born again by His Spirit.

To accentuate his first statement, John added, "In him is no darkness at all" (verse 5). The light which is God can never be eclipsed. There is no possibility for any shadow ever to manifest itself. There is no way in which God can be tainted with darkness. He remains pure, flaw-

In compliance with the request of the delegates to the annual prayer conference in the Western Pennsylvania District, Mr. Johnson has prepared in written form some of the messages delivered to them. This is the first one. Others will appear later.

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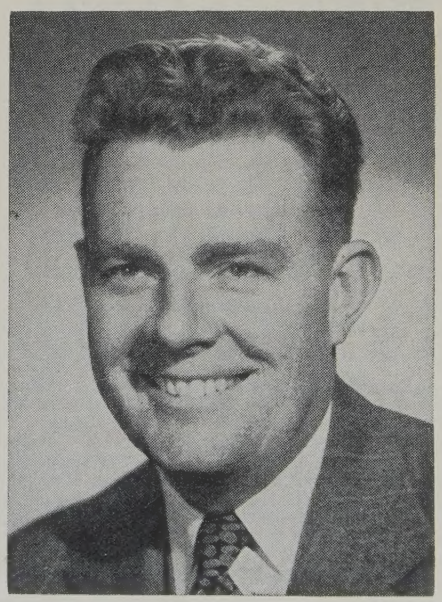
Mr. Johnson



less, without spot, revealing truth in all its beauty and glory. This then is the God with whom we may have fellowship.

As we might expect, there are conditions which we must meet. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (verse 6). Paul exhorted new believers in almost the same words: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). In this passage he enumerates the "unfruitful works of darkness" and makes no allowance for those who indulge in them. They are fornication, all uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking and jesting.

A similar list appears in Galatians 5, where they are described as the "works of the flesh." Let us not forget all that is involved in being "children of light." Too often we measure ourselves by the standards we see exhibited in the lives of fellow Christians rather than comparing ourselves with those standards that are revealed in the person of Christ (2 Cor. 10:12).

In verse eight the condition is made more explicit: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." This does not have primary reference to sins committed before conversion but rather to those committed afterwards. This is due partly to our failure to keep before us the gulf that exists between our impurity and God's holiness. The deeper we are rooted in God, the greater is our awareness of our sins and shortcomings. It is not that we flagrantly ignore the commandments of God (for this we cannot do if we have been saved), but as we come closer to God His purity discloses our impurities. Once we might have committed murder but now we struggle against the spirit of the world. Once we possessed a violent temper but now we detest even an evil thought.

We must even beware of working ourselves into some spiritual experience and ignoring the principle of a constant trust in God. It might be stated in this fashion: There is the sin of working in the interests of the kingdom of God when we ought to be praying, and there is also the sin of praying when we ought to be shouldering our responsibilities in some form of service. Let us take heed that we do not deceive ourselves in these matters. The process of self-examination is indispensable to spiritual growth and with it there comes a deepening of our fellowship with God.

On the positive side John declares we are to "walk in the light, as he is in the light" (verse 7). This is a matter of practice. It is daily walking in the truth which has been revealed through the Word of Life. John describes it in the Gospel as the "abiding life." This walk is more than imitation, as brought out in the words of Alford: "But there is an identity in the essential element of our daily walk with the essential element of God's eternal being, not imitation but coincidence and identity of the very atmosphere of life." Does not this indicate the kind of fellowship God would have us experience?

There is also another condition: confession of sin (verse 9). This is just the opposite of saying "if we say that we have no sin." Confession calls for something more than a superficial acknowledgment that I am a sinner. It is a genuine confession of the very acts of sin in which I realize that because of my sins I have not only hurt others and myself, but I have offended God. It is a sincere, penitent disclosure spring-

Rejoice, the Lord Is King!

Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore;
Mortals, give thanks and sing,
And triumph evermore;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

Jesus, the Saviour, reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When He had purged our stains
He took His seat above;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail,
He rules o'er earth and heaven,
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

He sits at God's right hand
Till all His foes submit,
And bow to His command,
And fall beneath His feet:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

—CHARLES WESLEY.

ing from the heart, prompted not by outward coercion but by an inward sense of personal guilt. Spiritual victory cannot be achieved apart from this type of confession when sins have been committed.

But there are glorious results accruing from this practice. "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (verse 9). It means that the debit account is wiped out and that we receive a release from the penalties incurred by our sins. This might be called a "judicial forgiveness." But, thank God, there is more than that extended to the penitent heart. There is purification by cleansing. This goes beyond pardon and deals with the sin itself. It is washed away through the cleansing of the blood of Jesus Christ. This is true absolution. Hereby the life of God is renewed in the believer. "It is entering into the victory of light over darkness which the blood secures" (Candlish).

Certainly we may conclude that the Word sets forth in clear, unmistakable language the condition to be met in order to enjoy fellowship with God. Let us therefore walk in the light. ◆ ◆

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It Doesn't Take Courage To Ride a Bandwagon

By REV. CHARLES E. NOTSON

Missionary to Chinese and Assistant Editor of THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY

HOTLY debated public issues apparently demand that we all give expression to our opinions. We quickly assume that a person who refrains from taking sides is either lacking in courage or too indifferent to have convictions. Perhaps he is afraid of offending someone, possibly his employer. We seldom give him credit for having any motive for silence other than his personal interest.

Pressure upon an individual is multiplied in the case of a magazine, especially if editorial opinion on other matters is strong and is well reasoned. Assuming that the editor has intelligence enough to see the rightness of their side and embrace it, readers of the magazine are anxious to know what he will say in support of it. Seldom do we recognize that it may require more courage to keep silent than to take part in some arguments.

Religious journals often are charged with pussyfooting or fence straddling if they fail to declare allegiance to every program of social reform which is reputed to be Christian. On every sharp issue extremists demand open support for what they are sure is right. Anyone who does not follow them is branded as spineless. They leave no middle ground. It does not occur to them that there may be three sides to the question: their side, the other side and the right side.

The trouble with social questions is that they often stir such deep feelings that no one can form a purely objective opinion. Personal experiences determine the position we adopt. Whatever research we do is usually for the purpose of confirming that position or for the sake of finding loopholes in the opposing one.

Racial segregation as a social issue is an example of this. It now holds the limelight in public debate. Both segregationists and integrationists claim scriptural support. Both express disgust that anyone could profess to be a Christian and embrace the other side. The "middle ground" in this issue is no place for a coward. Unless he has strong convictions that neither side of the issue, as it is being discussed, is worthy of his unqualified support, a person is apt to be carried along with the partisan sentiment prevailing among his closer associates. There is nothing heroic about that.

There are some excellent reasons for refusing to champion either position in the current debate. Certain implications of segregation are the product of prejudice. They enforce an artificial standard of human values. Desegregationists' insistence upon "voluntary humility" and the employment of carnal measures for squaring the old score between races are equally repugnant to spiritually-minded people. Prejudice against the white race is not any more Christian than prejudice against the colored races. Abandoning one extreme to embrace another is no mark of spiritual enlightenment.

Attempting to enforce desegregation by law is not more commendable than enforcing segregation by law. Both positions are deplorable. Neither can stand the test that would qualify them as Christian.

The chief fallacy in both sides lies in their denial of the right of race consciousness. An imposed segregation breeds resentment. It implies a superiority quite apart from considerations of real worth and character. The natural tendency of people having strong cultural and racial ties is to prefer each other's company. When forced by law to abide within limits arbitrarily erected on the basis of race, they have impressed upon them the stamp of inferiority. This does violence to their race consciousness. Thus they are made to feel ashamed of that in which they would otherwise take delight and pride.

Here and there some great-spirited man, while conforming humbly to the restrictions placed upon his race, renders such valuable services to mankind that he transcends all barriers and is honored by all men. Superiority of this kind is based upon worth rather than upon birth. Such men lend dignity to the consciousness of their race. Instead of spending their energies in *demanding* respect, they prove by their lives their right to be treated in accord with decent standards of human dignity and produce unanswerable evidence that artificial barriers are untenable and unnecessary. But best of all, they strengthen self-respect among their own people. They prove that human dignity is its own defense and does not depend upon social and political agitation aimed at forcing grudging recognition from people who are not yet ready to give it.

This article is not an official pronouncement of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, nor does it necessarily represent the majority opinion among the members of the Society. It is, rather, the conviction of the author; a conviction, incidentally, which is shared by the Editor.—A. W. T.

Among certain advocates of desegregation, race consciousness is often spoken of as if it were a sin or a fault of social thinking. They have the idea that God's ultimate purpose will be achieved when all peoples of earth are amalgamated into one indiscriminate mixture in which all racial distinctions are lost. They insist that we all close our eyes to differences of color and other characteristics which distinguish earth's peoples. How easily they overlook the egotistical patronage inherent in their thinking. With what benign condescension do they stoop to acknowledge brotherhood. Their pious do-goodism is as offensive as the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

Is God's purpose best shown in an ignoring of racial differences? Which is better, a healthy respect of each race for all the others or a painful struggle on the part of us all to divest ourselves of race consciousness? I have observed Chinese young people in the Philippine Islands trying to conceal the fact that they were Chinese rather than Filipinos. There has never been any segregation enforced by law in the Philippines, but officially and socially the Chinese are made to feel that they are aliens. Some of this is due to their own aloofness and their tendency to segregate themselves. It was this that these young people were trying to shrug off, but in so doing they were showing themselves ashamed of their heritage and their racial culture. In no case did this give evidence of contributing toward the development of a higher character. Neither they nor their associates among the Filipinos were benefited by this attitude. It appeared rather to be a degenerating factor.

Without exception, when one of these young people was converted to Christ he took a new interest and a legitimate pride in his own race. His associations with Filipino friends were purged of unwholesome pretenses. In Christ he found a poise which enabled him to be thankful to be a Chinese and at the same time to respect those of other races.

As the Chinese church has developed and grown, the results of an altered appraisal of the Chinese people has begun to be apparent among the Filipinos. They have been not a little surprised at the capacity for spiritual apprehension shown by members of the Chinese community. They had always before written them off as characteristically and hopelessly materialistic.

While it may be true that racial distinctions will disappear in heaven, we have no warrant for the efforts being made utterly to dispense with them here upon earth. Neither have we a right to embarrass anyone because of his race nor to humiliate persons who happen to possess a color of skin different from our own.

We understand from the words of Christ that there will be no sex distinction in heaven. Yet maintained in mutual honor and consideration here on earth these very distinctions reflect glory upon the Christian community and elevate a standard of purity for all peoples.

There is a way to improve race relations but it is not the way of legally enforced segregation nor is it the way of desegregation sustained by federal court injunctions. Christians of every race should beware letting themselves become the tools of partisan extremists. Enthusiasm for Christ and His Church is infinitely better than enthusiasm for some cause that parades itself as "Christian" but is not under Christ's direction.

A person who fears being scorned for not demonstrating his Christianity by climbing on every bandwagon of social reform should take heed. Such fear may betray lack of inner assurance, that answer of God's Spirit to a living faith in Him. ◆ ◆ ◆

This Week's Cover

Our cover this week shows the Parliament House at Canberra, the capital of Australia. The background of the Australian Alps and the tree-covered slopes make a lovely setting for this "garden city." Highly industrialized, Australia is also one of the world's largest wheat producers and supplies much of the world's wool.

Readers of THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY live in almost every country of the world, and it is delightful to hear of the spiritual inspiration the magazine brings to them.

The Expulsive Power of the Spirit

By GEORGE MATHESON

"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (MATT. 12:28).

It is no proof of being in God's kingdom that a man is free from some of his past vices. It is not enough that the devils should be cast out; they must be cast out by Christ's Spirit. Other things than that can expel them. A man may lose his passions by becoming cold, he may grow dead to temptation by growing dead altogether.

There are two kinds of calm in the moral world; there is a calm of summer heat and there is a calm of icebound winter. Both have expelled from their seas the demon of the storm, but from how different a cause! The one peace has come from nature's fullness, the other from nature's barrenness; the one from the warmth of love, the other from the paralysis of selfishness.

Son of Man, it is by Thy Spirit alone that I wish my demons to be expelled. I would not be freed from vice by being freed from impulse; I would not be made pure by being made an icicle. I would be pure as Thou art pure—not by receiving less life, but by getting more. I would be holy as Thou art holy—not by diminishing the impulses of nature, but by the overmastering strength of one impulse—love. Love, more love, *Thy* love, it is that that I want —not life made feebler or more inert, but life more abundantly, life eternal.

I pray that my flight from temptation be not in the winter—not prompted by mere iceboundness, mere inability to feel. I pray that my flight may be in the summer of Thy love, that I may be tempted from evil by the very temptation to goodness. Sin is a spirit and spirit can only be conquered by spirit. The expulsion of Satan from my heart is worthless if he be not expelled by Thee.

Come into my heart, Thou Love unspeakable, and put *Thy* chains about him and lead him captive at Thy will; if Thy Spirit shall cast him out, I shall know that the kingdom has come.

DAVID R. ENLOW, Editor

T HOME

vangelical leader asks halt in aid to Colombia: An ficial of the National Association of Evangelicals urged nited States senators to halt economic aid to Colombia ntil such time as all religious violence is stopped" ere. Dr. Clyde W. Taylor, in a letter to every member the Senate, termed such a step a "moral obligation of r government." He is the NAE's secretary of public airs.

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mphony by Dr. Rene Frank gets première: "Passion mphony," an orchestral composition written by Dr. ene Frank, professor of music at Fort Wayne Bible ollege, had its *première* performance recently when it as played by the Indiana University Philharmonic Orestra at Bloomington, Ind. Frank's symphony is a musil portrayal of the passion of Christ. He named the ree movements "Gethsemane," "Jerusalem" and "Goltha."

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ew York Bible Society reports on work: The New York ble Society distributed last year 1,110,149 copies of the riptures in seventy different languages within the city New York and around its harbor. Dr. David Fant, gen al secretary, told the 147th anniversary meeting that e 1956 figures brought the total distribution of Scripres during the Society's history to 39,004,287 copies.

●

nounce program to support Protestant colleges: An erdenominational action program to support some 470 otestant church-related colleges in the United States s announced at the annual meeting of the American sociation of Colleges in Philadelphia. The group also cided to develop plans for special help for smaller accredited church colleges, where such help is recomnded by related denominations.

●

ble College granted state accreditation: Fort Wayne ble College recently received final accreditation from e Indiana Department of Public Instruction for teach training programs now being offered by the college. cluded is a full elementary education program, which ins for public school teaching through the eighth ade. In addition, the college holds accreditation for ining high school teachers in the areas of English, mu and speech.

ABROAD

Recorded programs prohibited in Colombia: A new law in Colombia, South America, prohibits the importing of any kind of discs, records or tape recordings, etc. This is a measure taken to exclude a list of approximately four hundred articles which are considered luxuries in an effort to meet the grave economic crisis confronting the nation because of the lack of credit drafts abroad. The law affects the sending of recorded evangelical programs into Colombia from other countries.

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Greater Europe Mission to expand Bible institutes: Because both its Bible institutes in Europe are proving too small to accommodate growing numbers of applicants, the Greater Europe Mission is planning an expansion program. "Our goal will be to provide each school with a permanent campus including enough property for future development," stated Rev. Noel O. Lyons, home director of the mission. The older European Bible Institute in Paris, which now has graduates at work in ten countries of Europe and the Middle East, prepares several gospel programs weekly in its radio studios for broadcast to Spain. At the German Bible Institute in Bensheim, student enrollment has more than doubled during its second year.

PEOPLE

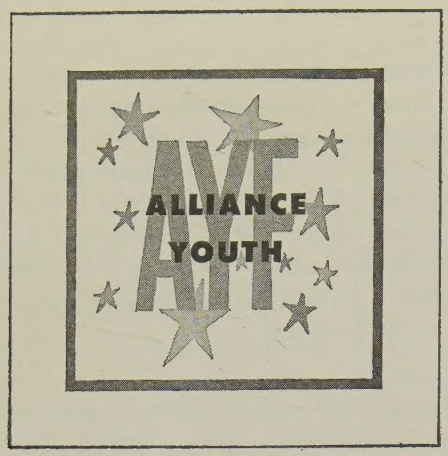
Beavan resigns from Graham organization: Jerry Beavan has resigned as public relations director of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Health was given as the basic factor in the decision, together with the necessity of curtailing his excessive travel which has averaged more than 100,000 flying miles per year during the past six years.

THE PRESS

Evangelical editors told of press responsibilities: A free press does not fulfill its moral obligations to society unless it also is a responsible press, the Evangelical Press Association was told at its ninth annual convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, of Washington, D. C., editor of *Christianity Today,* said that "even the religious press unfortunately lapses at times from the sense of absolute obligation to God and the truth." . . . Russell Hitt, editor of *Eternity* magazine in Philadelphia, was re-elected president of the association. A total of 111 editors attended the meeting.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Danish pastor drops sermons, shows films: A Lutheran pastor in Copenhagen has boosted attendance at weekday evening services in his church by dispensing with the usual sermon and showing religious films instead. Rev. Martin Jeorgensen, of St. Paul's Church, had found congregations disappointingly small until he sought permission from Bishop Hans Fuglsang-Damgaard, of Copenhagen, Primate of the State Lutheran Church, to try out the innovation.



WELDON B. BLACKFORD, Editor

My Full Surrender

By F. B. MEYER

AYFers will enrich their lives by taking time to read the spiritual crises which came to outstanding men of God in their youth. F. B. Meyer, one of God's honored servants in past days, gives a testimony of such a crisis. This word may be of help to young people today who are confronted with a similar spiritual conflict.

The visit of Messrs. Stanley, Smith and Studd to Melbourne Hall will always mark an epoch in my life. Before that my Christian life had been spasmodic and fitful, now flaming up with enthusiasm and then pacing wearedly over leagues of gray ashes and cold cinders. I saw that these young men had something which I had not, but which was within them a constant source of rest and strength and joy. And never shall I forget a scene at seven o'clock in the gray November morning, as daylight was flickering into the bedroom, paling the guttered candles which from a very early hour had been lighting up the page of Scripture, and revealing the figures of the devoted Bible students.

The talk we held then was one of the formative influences of my life. Why should I not do as they had done? Why should I not yield my whole nature to God, working out day by day that which He would will and work within? Why should I not be a vessel, though only of earthenware, meet for the Master's use because purged and sanctified?

There was nothing new in what they told me. They said, "A man must not only believe in Christ for final salvation, but must trust Him for victory over every sin and for deliverance from every care." They said that "the Lord Jesus was willing to abide in the heart which was wholly yielded up to Him." They said that "if there were some things in our lives that made it difficult for us to surrender our whole nature to Christ, yet if we were willing to be made willing to surrender them, He would make us not only willing, but glad." They said that "directly we give or attempt to give ourselves to Him, He takes us."

All this was simple enough; I could have said it myself. But they urged me to take the definite step, and I shall be forever thankful that they did. And if in a distant country they should read this page, let them be encouraged to learn that one heart at least has been touched with a new fire, and that one voice is raised in prayer for their increase in the knowledge and love of Him who has become more real to the suppliant because of their brotherly words.

Very memorable was the night when I came to close quarters with God. The angel that wrestled with Jacob had found me, eager to make me a prince. There were things in my heart and life which I felt were questionable, if not worse; I knew that God had a controversy with respect to them; I saw that my very dislike to probe or touch them was a clear indication that there was mischief lurking beneath. It is the diseased joint that shrinks from the touch, the tender eye that shudders at the light.

At the same time I did not feel willing to give up these things. It was a long struggle. At last I said feebly, "Lord, I am willing to be made willing; I am desirous that Thy will should be done in me and through me, as thoroughly as it is done in heaven; come and take me and break me, and make me."

That was the hour of crisis; and when it had passed I felt able at once to add, "And now I give myself to Thee, body, soul and spirit; in sorrow or in joy, in the dark or in the light, in life or in death, to be Thine only, wholly and forever. Make the most of me that can be made for Thy glory."

No rapture or rush of joy came to assure me that the gift was accepted. I left the place with almost a heavy heart. I simply assured myself that He must have taken that which I had given, and at the moment of my giving it. And to that belief I clung in all the days that followed, constantly repeating to myself the words, "I am His."

And thus at last the joy and rest entered, and victory and freedom from burdening care, and I found that He was molding my will and making it easy to do what I had thought impossible; and I felt that He was leading me into the paths of righteousness for His name's sake but so gently as to be almost imperceptible to my weak sight.

Too few of us recognize His Lordship. We are willing enough to take Him as Saviour; we hesitate to make Him King.

AYF Guide

Bible Reading Plan for School Days

March 4-8

Monday ..... Genesis 25
Tuesday ..... Psalm 27
Wednesday ..... Luke 5:17-26
Thursday ..... Psalms 75, 76
Friday ..... Acts 14:19-28

The Contest Corner

February 1 to May 31

A major object of the Program Contest is obtaining the participation of the whole group in the program. Too often only one person plans all the meetings. Some leaders find it difficult to see that from time to time planning the weekly meeting should be shared by all the AYFers. The program kit suggests that the AYF be divided into program teams during the contest period. Try it. It works.

There is no limit to the number of programs an AYF may enter in the contest. Please attach the information requested on the *Registration Slip,* found in the contest kit to each program entered. Your contest kit only contains one registration form for programs. Kindly make your own duplicate copies as needed.

Paths Lost in the Darkness

By REV. WILLIAM J. BREIDINGER, *Africa*

Washed-out bridges and muddy roads make travel in the Upper Volta difficult at times. The moisture is good for the crops, but it has kept us shut up in Dedougou for long periods. Even when we did make a few trips over the main thoroughfares we have often been stuck in deep mud. Once we lost the muffler and part of the tail pipe in a water hole. Changing a tire when the vehicle is standing in soft mud is no fun, especially when the rain is falling in torrents.

Our worst experience with the truck happened when we were returning from Ziga. This village is off the main highway and we had to travel over untilled farm land for some distance before we could get on the main path. Our purpose in going to Ziga was to take a teacher, in response to a request which had come from forty prospective believers. These people gave us a wonderful welcome and were happy to have us hold an evangelistic service. We were the first missionaries ever to visit their village.

Darkness had fallen before we started back to Dedougou, and we quickly lost the footpath. One of the African men with us offered to run ahead of the truck to guide us. Slowly we progressed through the tall grass following his lead, when suddenly the rear wheels dropped into a hole and we were stuck. Our guide was embarrassed and explained the car was wider than his feet!

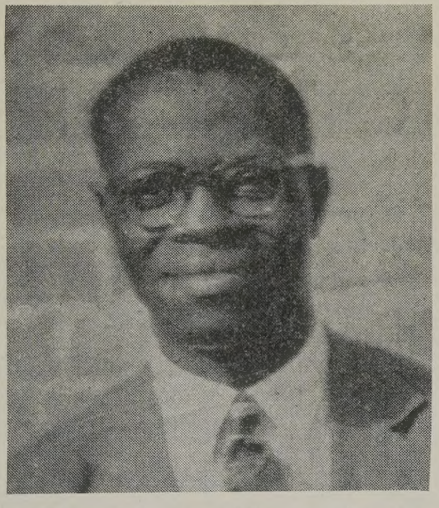
A group of believers from the next town responded to the request we sent by one of the men, and before long they had us rolling on again.

Ziga was opened to the gospel through the efforts of Job Bata and his wife, Jamima, who were located at nearby Sanaba. When Jamima was in the hospital at the time their third child was born, Job was lured into sin by the chief's daughter. Although Job and Jamima have been reconciled the scandal will not be easy to live down and the new teacher, Joseph, and his wife, Rachel, have an extremely difficult task to perform in Ziga. They will need your prayers.

An African Evangelist

By REV. J. E. NICHOLSON, *Congo*

God has given to Alabeti Paku a gift of evangelism which makes him effective in winning his own people to Christ. As one man said, "He hits us right where we are."



Alabeti Paku, an able evangelist in the Congo, is the son of Rev. Tomasi Paku, president of the Congo church

Not only is he an able preacher of God's Word, but he has a tender heart and yearns for the salvation of lost men. The urgency of his message rises partly from experiences he has had in pleading with men who failed to seize their opportunity and never had another.

One young man laughed when he exhorted him to turn from his wicked ways and seek the Lord. He said that first he wanted to taste the world. The evangelist asked how many years he thought it would take to satisfy his yearnings for things of the world. "Oh," he laughingly replied, "many years." That very day, a short time after that conversation, the boy was killed in an auto accident. He was on his way to a large city to indulge in its pleasures. He did not realize that his life was measured in hours, not in years.

To these people steeped in witchcraft and fetishism, only another African can bring the truth so that it penetrates as deep as their habits and customs. A young acquaintance of the evangelist was showing him a fine pen which he had bought. He boasted that it had power to bring him wealth. With it he could know the future and in times of sickness the pen would be his help.

Not long after this his baby was suddenly taken very ill and was expected to die. Realizing that only God had power over death the young man called for the evangelist to pray. Alabeti reminded him of his foolish boastings and asked what had happened to his faith in the pen. "Don't ask me that question," he sobbed. Seeing that he was truly repentant, Alabeti took the babe in his arms. It was so limp he paused for fear it might die while he held it. But then he started to pray and as he called upon the Lord new life came into the child's body. God completely restored health to the little one and it is now living a normal life.

Recently when Dr. and Mrs. H. L. Turner were in Congo a great crowd gathered to see and hear them. After Mrs. Turner had given her testimony, Dr. Turner spoke on the three kinds of people in the world, the natural man, the carnal man and the spiritual man. Afterward the evangelist elaborated on the message which had been interpreted, making sure that the people would understand it. He said, "This man has come from America and no one has told him about us, but he has told us exactly the way we in the church are living today. The Spirit of God has spoken through him. Now what are you going to do about it?" Many believers came to the altar and tarried to pray that God would cleanse them from all carnality and fill them with His Spirit.

We should expect the Holy Spirit to call and anoint many such men that they shall be powerful instruments in His hands for proclaiming the riches of God's mercy among the people of Africa.

THE GROWING SUNDAY SCHOOL

MAVIS L. ANDERSON, Editor

Utilizing Our Neglected Forces

A man standing near Niagara Falls made the observation that this was the greatest unused power to be found in the world. One of his friends replied, "I wonder if there isn't a greater source of unused power right in our churches."

I wonder.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance was born out of a passion to win a lost world and to recruit an indifferent church to accomplish the task. "I walked up and down the sand beach at Old Orchard, Maine, in the summer of 1881," said A. B. Simpson, "and asked God in some way to raise up a great missionary movement that would reach the neglected fields of the world and utilize the neglected forces of the church at home."

Throughout the years God has graciously brought into being this great missionary movement, and with the years the challenge and opportunities have increased until today we hear the question, "Where are we going to get the personnel to do what needs to be done?"

As we face the immediate need for recruits for foreign and home service perhaps we should stop and ask ourselves if we actually have planned to utilize the forces of the church at home. Somewhere along the line workers must be recruited and developed. They must be enlisted and put into basic training. This should be the program of the local church.

It is tragic to note the large percentage of our congregations who receive what the church has to offer but who fail to coöperate in its program or accept its responsibilities. It may not be wholly their fault. Many of our people are willing. We have numerous consecration services, and our altars are often filled with young people and adults giving themselves to God for His service. Then why in the average church are 75 per cent of the people idle? Is there no need of workers?

Jesus told of the householder who saw people standing in the market place. He asked them, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" And the reply was, "No man hath hired us." Perhaps many of the people in our churches could bring the same accusation—"No man hath hired us." It is not enough to evangelize. We must also utilize!

We may have failed to utilize these neglected forces because we have not planned for specific avenues of service for them.

Through its extensive program the Sunday school can recruit both young and old in basic training. As these workers are developed and as they find themselves in active service in the local church, how much easier it will be for many of them to find their places in the front lines of Christian service at home and abroad!

To help you with your planning we have prepared a check list of some of the avenues of service that are open through the Sunday school. This does not include the many teachers and officers necessary to staff our schools. If your work is carefully planned it will encourage those who are looking for an opportunity to give their unused time, their talents and their possessions to the Lord.

Check List for Active Service in the Growing Sunday School

WELCOME!
- Chairman of Transportation
- Drivers of courtesy cars
- Receptionist—to assign students to classes
- Welcoming committee—at each entrance
- Telephone brigades
- Carpenters—for better equipment
- Painters—for brighter rooms

CRADLE ROLL
- Visitor for every ten babies
- Hostesses for mothers' meetings
- Baby sitters
- Nursery schedule for all services

LIBRARY
- Preparing books
- Assisting in library hours
- Collecting pictures for use in younger departments

PUBLICITY
- Publicity chairman
- Committees to handle: typing, mimeographing, posters, bulletin boards, signs, folding, stuffing, addressing

HELPERS
- To grade lesson quarterlies
- To assist with wraps in younger departments
- To provide homes and transportation for extracurricular activities

VISITATION
- Visitation chairman
- Secretaries
- Home Department visitors
- Group leaders in adult and young people's classes

ALL CAN PARTICIPATE IN
- Canvassing—missionary visitation
- Prospect calling
- Absentee visitation
- Every member visitation
- Providing transportation for visitation staff
- Baby sitting for visitors

PRAYER PARTNERS
- See ALLIANCE WEEKLY, January 30

MISSIONARY EDUCATION
- Missionary education chairman
- Secretary—to secure information from the fields
- Publicity secretary—to be responsible for bulletin boards
- Departmental representatives

CHILDREN CAN SERVE TOO!
- Class officers: president, secretary, treasurer
- Marching leader
- Blackboard monitor
- Crayola custodian
- Room monitor
- Messengers
- Bombers—to distribute gospel bombs in the community, and so on.

For bulletin, "How to Enlist Workers," write: National Sunday School Office, 260 West 44th St., New York 36, N. Y.

ALLIANCE WEEKLY Campaign

Last week we printed the churches which received sixty or more ALLIANCE WEEKLY subscriptions during the 1956 Campaign. We complete the listing in this issue.

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CLIFFORD E. HARROD, Reporter

News reports may be sent direct to Rev. C. E. Harrod, The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, East and Lane Streets, Raleigh, N. C.

To the Fields

Miss Janet Roland left New York by plane February 9 for Cambodia. Miss Roland comes from Altoona, Pa. She is a graduate of St. Paul Bible Institute and for the past two years has been working as the secretary to the superintendent of the Western Pennsylvania District of the C. & M. A. She will be stationed at Pnom Penh.

Janet Roland
Cambodia

Dorothy Adam, R.N. *Alice Ryan, R.N.*
French West Africa

Misses Dorothy Adam, R.N., and *Alice Ryan, R.N.*, sailed from New York February 11, returning to French West Africa for their second term of missionary service.

Both young women are the daughters of missionary parents. Miss Adam is the daughter of Rev. and Mrs. R. J. Adam, now living in Maitland, Fla. She is returning to the school for missionaries' children in Mamou. Miss Ryan will be stationed at the girls' Bible school in Béoumi, Ivory Coast. Her parents are Rev. and Mrs. C. C. Ryan, now residing in New Castle, Pa.

Rev. and Mrs. Charles C. Eamigh left Los Angeles by plane on February 7, returning to Ecuador for their sixth term of service. Their furlough was extended over three years because of their health. The Eamighs first went to the field in 1923. They will live at Guayaquil and Mr. Eamigh will minister throughout the field in Bible teaching and evangelistic work.

The New Generation

To *Rev. and Mrs. George V. Erickson*, Petaluma, Calif., a daughter, Sandra Sue, on January 13.

To *Rev. and Mrs. Frank Dombrowski, Jr.*, Hornell, N. Y., a son, David Clark, on January 10.

Pastor Installed at Bossburg, Pa.

Rev. John Wesley Muffley was installed as the new pastor of The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church at Blossburg, Pa., in a special service held January 18. Rev. George Husted, of Blossburg, gave the charge to the congregation and Rev. Emerson Ross challenged the pastor. Rev. Richard Herritt, of Harrison Valley, offered the prayer of consecration.

Spirit of Revival at New Brighton, Pa.

Rev. J. Kimber Bellig, pastor of the Marion Hill Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, New Brighton, Pa., writes of the moving of God in the regular services of the church for the past several months. He attributes this to three factors: a Saturday night men's prayer meeting, a series of meetings held recently with Rev. H. P. Rankin and enlargement of church and Sunday school facilities.

During the Rankin meetings there were many miracles of healing as God manifested His power. One lady was reported healed of cancer in the hospital and a boy was delivered of a hernia. Forty-one came forward for spiritual needs and God very graciously answered their prayers. The burden of the church is that nothing will check the spirit of revival that continues.

Successful Campaign at Punxsutawney, Pa.

During the week of January 20 to 27 Rev. H. P. Rankin held a very successful revival campaign in The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of Punxsutawney, Pa., with more than fifty persons coming forward to seek physical and spiritual help. The pastor, Rev. David L. Bowland, writes that a spirit of expectancy prevailed among the congregation throughout the campaign and that the attendance was good. The climax of the meetings came on the final Sunday night when twenty-seven persons came forward.

Rev. and Mrs. C. C. Eamigh
Ecuador

Letters

Plain and Easily Understood

I enjoyed so much the article in the WEEKLY by Brother Carl Henry, "Christian Personal Righteousness" (January 16). His explanation of the Word is so plain and easily understood. I hope we may have the pleasure of reading more of his messages before too long.

I have been reading the WEEKLY for forty years and do look forward to each copy.—MRS. A. B. WEBB, *Hagerstown, Md.*

Prophetic Conference Held in Akron

An eight-day series of prophetic meetings was held at the Lovers Lane Church of Akron, Ohio, January 20 to 28, with Rev. Frank Bertram Miller as the speaker. Mr. Miller used large charts to illustrate his messages. The pastor, Rev. Hubert L. Jackson, writes that interest was exceptionally good and the attendance was better than anticipated in view of sub-zero weather.

Spiritual help came to many through the sane messages of the evangelist, who emphasized the deeper life in presenting the truths relative to the imminent return of Jesus Christ. At the closing service a great number moved forward to seek God and true righteousness. Young people as well as adults met God in a new way and testified to a new desire to obey Him.

63rd Bible and Missionary Convention

March 10-17

PITTSBURGH (N.S.), PA.

CARNEGIE HALL

DR. KENNETH C. FRASER, Director

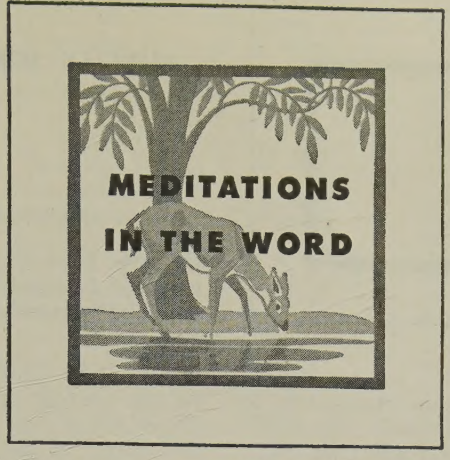
Speakers

DR. ROBERT COOK, *Chicago, Ill.*
REV. D. C. KOPP, *Punxsutawney, Pa.*
REV. L. J. ISCH, *Johnson City, N. Y.*
DR. R. R. BROWN, *Omaha, Nebr.*
REV. WILLIAM FOLEY, *Tucson, Ariz.*
REV. HARRY TAYLOR, *Cambodia*
REV. HARVEY BOSTROM, *Ecuador*
REV. LLOYD VAN STONE, *New Guinea*

Musicians

J. STRATTON SHUFELT, *Wheaton, Ill.*
NORTHLANDERS OF SWEDEN, *Rockford, Ill.*

For further information write or phone Rev. Ralph E. Godwin, Assistant Pastor, 709 Union Avenue, Pittsburgh 12, Pa.



Compiled by EDITH M. BEYERLE

Sunday

READING—Habakkuk 2:1-14.
TEXT—*"Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come"* (verse 3).

God's richest blessings often require not only sacrifice, suffering and hard conflict, but long delay. But the blessing grows with the delay. The interest gathers with the extended time. God's ratio is always compound interest. It is very blessed to receive in the early morning of life some precious promise, and then stand as the years go by and wait for God to fulfill it. . . . So God gave His ancient people the early promise and the waiting years. How His heart looks down with delight as His children hold fast, amid all testings, knowing that if "it tarry . . . it will surely come, it will not tarry" too long. Thus, and thus alone, are the strongest things matured. The basswood tree can grow in a decade, but the mighty oak that lasts for a century takes years to mature.—A. B. SIMPSON.

Pray for The Island World; Eastern, South Pacific Districts, Mexico.

Monday

READING—Revelation 3:7-13.
TEXT—*"Behold, I come quickly"* (verse 11).

Robert McCheyne once asked his friends, "Do you think Christ will come before night?" One after another said, "I think not." Then he solemnly repeated the text, "In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Martin Luther, in the midst of the turmoil attending the Reformation, wrote, "I ardently hope that amidst these internal dissensions on earth Jesus Christ will hasten the day of His coming." The acute and learned John Calvin saw that this was the church's true hope and he said, "We must hunger after Christ till the dawning of the great day when our Lord will fully manifest the glory of His kingdom." The soul of John Knox was upheld by this hope. He wrote to a friend in England, "Has not the Lord Jesus in spite of Satan's malice carried up our flesh into heaven? And shall He not return? We know He shall return, and that with expedition."—CHRISTIAN WITNESS.

Pray for India; Western Pennsylvania District.

Tuesday

READING—Philemon 1-14.
TEXT—*"Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ"* (verse 1).

I am here in a fair prison: Christ is my sweet and honorable fellow-prisoner, and I His sad and joyful lord-prisoner, if I may so speak. I think this cross becometh me well and is suitable to me in respect of my duty to suffer for Christ, howbeit not in regard of my deserving to be thus honored. However it be, I see that Christ is strong, even lying in the dust, in prison and in banishment. Losses and disgraces are the wheels of Christ's triumphant chariot. In the sufferings of His own saints, as He intendeth their good, so He intendeth His own glory, and that is the butt His arrows shoot at. And Christ . . . hitteth what He purposeth to hit; therefore He doth make His own feckless and weak nothings, and those that are the contempt of men, a "new sharp threshing instrument having teeth."—SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

Pray for Africa; Western, Western Canadian, Southeastern Districts.

Wednesday

READING—Deuteronomy 33:20-29.
TEXT—*"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms"* (verse 27).

Child of God, forlorn and weary,
Doth the way seem overlong?
Are the skies above thee dreary
And thou hast no heart for song?
Pause awhile! and think, and ponder—
There are arms outstretched for thee!
Arms that tell of love far fonder
Than earth's fondest love could be!

Outstretched! Tireless! And unfailing!
Underneath—these arms are spread!
Strong! Their strength so all-availing!
Softer yet than infant's bed!
Such the arms that now would hold thee:
Have thee know their perfect rest;
Have thee find, as they enfold thee,
Quenchless love on Jesu's breast.
—J. DANSON SMITH.

Pray for Indo-China, Thailand; Northeastern, Eastern and Central Canadian Districts.

Thursday

READING—Numbers 6:5-16.
TEXT—*"All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head"* (verse 5).

God claims the right of determining the personal appearance of His servant. This command again reminded the Nazarite that he was not his own but was utterly the Lord's. God claimed the very hair of his head. He was not at liberty to cut or trim it as he saw fit, nor to wear it as long or as short as might be agreeable to himself. So absolute was God's claim upon him that not merely while his vow lasted was the hair to be recognized as God's possession, but when the vow was fulfilled the whole of it was to be shaved off and was to be burnt upon the altar. Like the burnt offering it was to be recognized as for God's use alone, whether or not any utilitarian purpose were accomplished by the sacrifice.—J. HUDSON TAYLOR.

Pray for South America; Southwestern, Pacific Northwest Districts.

Friday

READING—2 Samuel 17:16-29.
TEXT—*"The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness"* (verse 29).

Probably no royal banquet ever tasted so good as did this table set with wholesome things for David and his men. Never was a bath so welcome! David and his loyal company had been roughing it in the wilderness. David not only suffered from privation but also from dark and puzzling circumstances. Like ministering angels, these three men, with merciful hearts, took pity upon David's company and acted accordingly. They were not wholly ignorant of what the reaction from Absalom and his men might be when they became aware of the kindnesses shown to David and his men, either. Evidently they were not of the class of individuals who could be influenced by the attitude of opposing forces. Today it would be called practical righteousness, of which James wrote.—PAMEII.

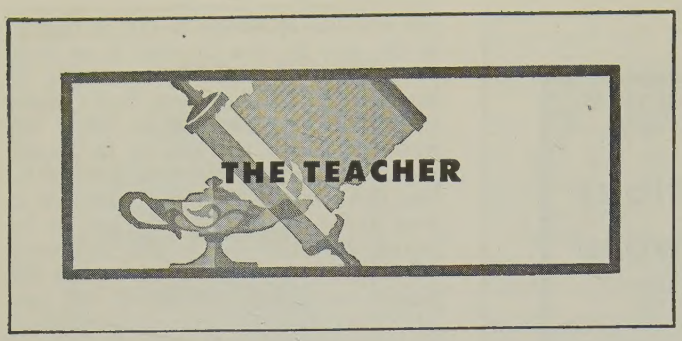
Pray for China, Hong Kong; Northwestern, New England Districts.

Saturday

READING—Matthew 11:20-30.
TEXT—*"Take my yoke upon you"* (verse 29).

It is only when you have taken up the yoke—His yoke—and put it upon your shoulders that you will find a fittingness in things such as you scarce dreamed of. Such a ready response to His demands will come from your whole being that you will literally find rest unto your soul. The days will seem short and the labor will be a song. Your spirit will enjoy a calm tranquillity. Try it. To shrink from or to refuse God-given tasks because they look forbidding and beyond your powers, or because they seem to interfere with your liberty of action, is a very great mistake. Once satisfied that it is really *His yoke* and that it is His yoke for *your shoulders*, take it up. You will one day humbly, and perhaps with trembling, thank God that you did not miss it.—SELECTED.

Pray for Israel, Jordan, Syria; Central, South Atlantic Districts; Jewish Work.



By DON J. KENYON

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON—MARCH 10, 1957

Forgiveness Unlimited

Matthew 18:21-35

DEVOTIONAL READING—Isaiah 55:6-9

GOLDEN TEXT—*"Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? . . . Jesus saith unto him, . . . Until seventy times seven."*—MATTHEW 18:21, 22.

BACKGROUND AND LESSON ORIENTATION

A well-grounded Jewish tradition based upon Amos 1:6, 9 was probably the basis for Peter's pious question. The Jews held the view that there was a point beyond which forgiveness need not be granted. Peter was pushing the act of forgiveness well beyond the accepted figure when he set it at seven times. Jesus had been doing some teaching on the subject which had disturbed the logic of some of these time-honored traditions. There is probably no issue more persistently disturbing to an honest man than an unforgiving friend or associate. Had Jesus set some point beyond which forgiveness was not necessary in His kingdom, He would have undermined, yes, destroyed, the spirit of His kingdom. The subject under discussion here is therefore pertinent to any man who has ever been offended.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the context of this discussion we find the teaching of Christ which may have led to Peter's direct question about the matter of forgiveness. The issue concerns one who has been offended, whose rights have been somehow violated. The responsibility for reconciliation is with the offended party and should go no farther than the offender. If an understanding is not reached, the facts involved may be established in the mouths of two or three spiritually interested parties. From this point any failure becomes the concern of the entire church. This is a function which has virtually disappeared from the church. The function of prayer demands a union of hearts. Any division nullifies faith (v. 19). So the matter, thus related to prayer, becomes a serious problem to all.

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE

1. *Christ Answers a Question*—Matthew 18:21, 22.
2. *Christ Illustrates the Point*—Matthew 18:23-34.
3. *Christ Applies the Point*—Matthew 18:35.

KEY WORD ANALYSIS

(1) "Take account"—*sunairo logon* (v. 23); used with *logos* it means an account given by word of mouth. This was by all tokens a reckoning day. It is a beautiful picture of the "times of refreshing" that come from the presence of the Lord. Were it not for these times, it is doubtful that any of us would come to a reckoning volitionally. It is the record of man that he must be pushed to a reckoning before he makes one.

(2) "Was brought"—*prosexthe* (v. 24). Significantly in keeping with the above, this one was brought to his reckoning owing a tremendous debt. Surely he would not have volitionally consulted with his lord. God's grace at times resorts to drastic action.

COMMENTARY ON THE PRINTED TEXT

1. *Christ Answers a Question* (Matt. 18:21, 22).

The word "then" which introduces this paragraph relates the thought to the preceding discussion. The question that Peter asked here was doubtless asked sincerely, if ignorantly. There was some evidence of piousness in Peter as the question "Till seven times?" well indicated. But since Peter thought he was being quite generous in his arbitrary figure of seven, the answer he was given is just as direct and arbitrary. It placed the aspect of unlimited forgiveness squarely on the questioner. It was overwhelming.

2. *Christ Illustrates the Point* (Matt. 18:23-34).

The drastic answer called for clarification and illustration. Christ told a parable to serve the purpose. He related the parable to His kingdom because this was a kingdom principle. The king of the parable desired a word of reckoning with his subjects. One particular fellow was brought, having been discovered in a tremendous debt. The implication is certainly that there had been defrauding of the king's interests. The colossal debt, impossible to pay, called for forgiveness. It was granted despite the guilt and open disgrace which was implicit in the matter.

Christ then turned to the scene of the same man under the same circumstances who could not find it in his heart to grant forgiveness for a debt of a very minor nature. The forgiven man was pictured as being cruel and implacable in his attitude. Christ deftly used the same plea for forgiveness upon the lips of both principals in the parable. This was deliberately done to show that at the same plea for forgiveness, the forgiven man failed to show the spirit of forgiveness with which he had been so graciously forgiven.

This is one of the most piercing and direct of Christ's parables. There is no obscurity possible in its meaning or application. Reduced to its simplest statement: In the kingdom of God we by grace have been forgiven of a staggering debt. In all our dealings with our fellow men we should remember to forgive as we have been forgiven. To fail to do this incurs the wrath of God. The reader should note that the fellow servants were "very sorry" but the lord was "wroth."

3. *Christ Applies the Point* (Matt. 18:35).

It was the full force of the parable that Christ pointed up to His disciples. It is doubtful that Peter expected such a thorough answer. We can be grateful to Peter and others for the questions they raised. By so doing some of the greatest teachings of Christ have been fully illuminated.

Note it was "from your hearts" that the forgiveness was required. Too many of us forgive with our lips and bear a grudge through a long period. The command was for "every one" to forgive. This teaches that there is no remote point in our relationships where good may be overtaken by evil. When forgiveness ceases Satan wins a victory.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR LESSON PREPARATION

The paragraph preceding (18:15-20) should be summarized as a background. Note that out of this the question of Peter arises. The three points suggested by the outline arise naturally from the passage. The question, the illustration, the application are the crux as well as the context of the lesson material. This is a powerful passage. Make full proof of your teaching.

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(Continued from page 11)

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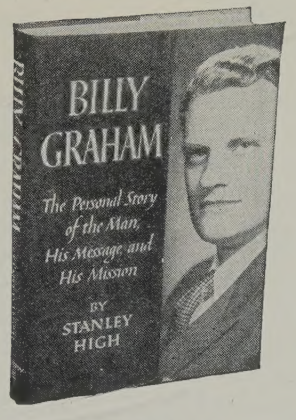

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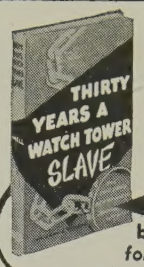

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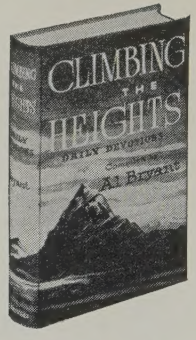

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The Ancient Foe Reviving

WHEN Japan was at war, participation in Shinto rites became the test of national loyalty. Because of this, Christians in Japan and in conquered lands faced a serious dilemma.

None of the believers had any desire to take part in reverencing the emperor or the national heroes of the past. But most of them thought it better to comply outwardly with minimum requirements than to court annihilation through an official ban denying them right of assembly. Pressure was so heavy that there seemed no alternative. A small minority did refuse to conform lest they compromise their testimony.

At the war's close Shintoism ceased to be the state religion; its influence was broken. Evangelical churches in Japan which had been pushed into a government-dominated organization sought to withdraw. Their bitter foe was dead and they enjoyed the prospect of public favor—or so they thought.

But the wounded cult of ancestor worship is rearing its head again. Old temples and shrines are being repaired. New ones are being erected. Once more the narrow streets of Japanese cities and villages re-echo with the shouts of crowds joining in Shinto festivals as in former days. The number of pilgrims visiting shrines is increasing every year.

It may take a long time for Shintoism to dominate the thoughts and actions of the people as it did before, but evidences of resurgence are a warning that the churches can expect renewed pressure when it does.

In Japan less than one-half of one per cent of the population, about 314,000, is classified as Christian. Comparatively few of these are truly born again. After ninety-seven years of missions, the outlook is not bright. Neither was the outlook bright when eleven disciples met behind barred doors for fear leaders of a state religion would discover them. Our prayers for Christians in Japan should concentrate upon their being endued with the same Spirit as they, and that uncompromising boldness shall characterize their witness.

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